

## State Contract Air Fares Save Millions of Taxpayer Dollars

Contract air fares negotiated by the State Travel Office save state agencies and other taxpayer-supported public entities millions of dollars in travel expenses each year, and fiscal 2004 was no exception.

The average airline ticket price last fiscal year for all travelers who use the State Travel Office was \$340.18. This compares to the average ticket price of \$481.60 for domestic corporate travel in the United States, as calculated by Topaz International. All of the money saved on airline fares stays in the budgets of the various entities that use the State Travel Office. These entities include state agencies, school districts, local governments, colleges, and universities.

**State agencies alone** booked 7,023 airline tickets in FY 2004 at the contracted state fares, resulting in savings of \$2,072,892.38 over the airlines' published fares for the same tickets.

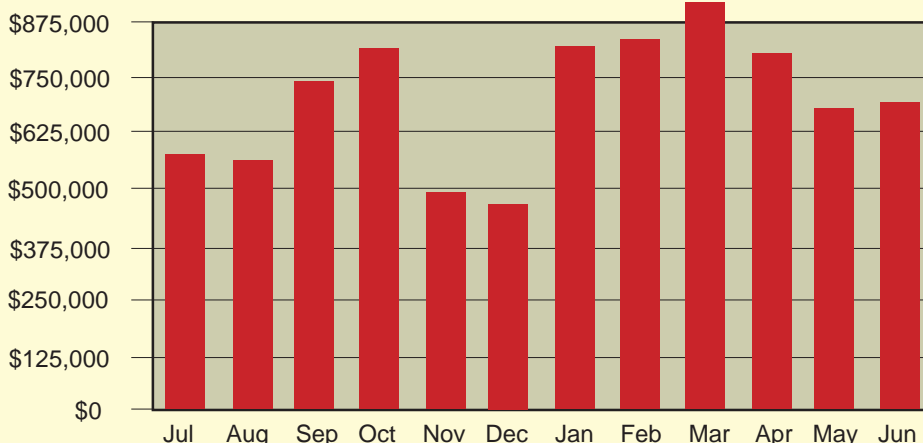
Airline tickets purchased at the state-contracted fares by **state agencies combined with the other entities** who use the State Travel Office totaled 27,181, resulting in savings of \$7,282,867.44 over the airlines' published fares for the same tickets.

For fiscal year 2004, we calculate that 37% of the tickets issued by the State Travel Office were for nonrefundable tickets purchased when travelers were required to stay over a Saturday night to attend a conference. The remaining 63% of the tickets were purchased using the state contract fares, which do not require a Saturday night stay.

The graph shown below illustrates the total dollars spent on airfare per month in FY 2004. The dollar amounts are for state agencies combined with local governments, school districts, colleges, and universities—the other entities that use the State Travel Office. ➔

### Air Volume by Month – FY 2004

State Agencies, Local Governments., School Districts,  
Colleges & Universities



*Total dollars spent on airfare per month in FY 2004*

### Hotel Per Diem Rates Have Not Changed

Despite what you may have heard, **lodging per diem rates for in-state travel have not changed**. According to state accounting policy FIACCT 10-02.04, Travel – Reimbursements – Lodging, the State will reimburse the actual cost of in-state lodging up to \$55 plus tax, with the following exceptions:



- \* Moab, Cedar City, St. George – \$65 plus tax
- \* Salt Lake City (Draper to Centerville), Park City, Heber City, Tooele, Midway – \$68 plus tax
- \* Ogden, Layton, Provo/Orem – \$63 plus tax

Please note that the Holiday Inn in Price, Utah does honor the \$55 in-state lodging per diem. However, **you must ask for the State of Utah rate** when you make reservations. If you ask for the government rate, the hotel will quote the federal government rate of \$60. The State will reimburse only up to \$55 plus tax.

### Travelers Need to Check In Only One Time

In response to questions we had about last month's article on what you can do to avoid being bumped from an overbooked flight, we would like to clarify the airline check-in procedure.

Travelers need to **check in only one time**—either curbside, at an airline kiosk, or at the airline's ticket counter. If you are taking only carry-on baggage and already have your boarding pass, you can proceed directly to the boarding gate.



Also please note that travelers making connecting flights do not need to check in again at the connecting flight's boarding gate. When you check in for the first leg of your trip, you are automatically checked in for the connecting flight that will take you to your final destination.

### Angie Has New E-Mail Address

You may want to make a note of Angie Lucas's new e-mail address. You can now reach her at [alucus@utah.gov](mailto:alucus@utah.gov) or by calling 801-538-3359. See the box below for e-mail addresses and telephone numbers for all State Travel Office agents. ➔



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